

LINCOLN CENTER AND FILM

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The Growing Importance of Cinema

The Need for a Director of Film at Lincoln Center

The Need for a Film Constituent at Lincoln Center

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John Fogel

## SUMMARY

### I. The Growing Importance of Cinema

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Cinema, the youngest of the arts, already can claim a body of incontrovertible achievement; it has the allegiance of the new generation evidenced by constant growth in theatres, schools, film societies, television; and Lincoln Center, "as an active agency for education and the arts," must therefore accept film as one of its concerns.

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- A. Its organization and coordination require the Director's year-round attention.

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We should not compete, but do what the industry cannot do; we need its active cooperation in obtaining films.

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While the emphasis is necessarily self-sustaining projects, the question of a subsidy for the Constituent's formative period, and for meritorious yet financially risky ventures needs to be carefully explored. With such support, Lincoln Center is in a position to develop what New York needs: a true center for cinema.



## I. The Growing Importance of Cinema

Film is an authentic twentieth-century art.

In existence less than one hundred years, it has already created a body of incontrovertible masterworks which testify both to its achievements and its enduring potential.

The works of Griffith, Eisenstein, Welles, Dreyer, Antonioni, De Sica, Ray, Resnais, Chaplin, Pudovkin, Kurosawa parallel in scope, measure of experimentation, development of form and mastery of style, the aims and accomplishments of creators in the other fields of contemporary art such as painting, music and dance, drama and literature.

The striking success of the First New York Film Festival offers further proof of the powerful role of cinema in the cultural life of our city and nation, especially among the young who rightly consider film the art of their own century, a universal art of today and the future.

There is a constant growth in art theatres, film societies, film festivals, film schools, film publications. There is an ever-increasing volume of significant international film criticism and literature; a constant growth of tendencies and factions, controversy and intellectual ferment on an international scale. These developments are characteristic of all virile, living art forms.

Equally significant have been the rapid evolution and importance of films as a medium of education. Literally thousands of films in the areas of social documentation, science, art and politics are produced internationally each year, leading to an ever-increasing utilization of the cinema by schools, civic groups, universities, churches. Largely through film, educational television has expanded into a national network, with its own station operating in New York as an ever more important factor in the cultural and educational life of the city.

Since the purpose of Lincoln Center is to serve "as an active agency for education and the advancement of the arts," it must concern itself with this new art of the cinema. The 1963 New York Film Festival was an illustrious beginning; now there is a need to move forward.

## II. The Need for a Director of Film at Lincoln Center

### 1. The New York Film Festival

- A. Its organization and coordination require the Director's year-round attention.

The experience of this year's Festival clearly proved that the scope and complexity of this particular venture alone require the services of its Director on a year-round basis.

Undoubtedly less elaborate than future Festivals, it unexpectedly involved the full-time services of its Coordinator for a seven months period in connection with:

Participation in programming (conferences, screenings, correspondence and negotiations in relation to selection and placement of films).

Supervision of theatre procedures and box office (public relations, time schedule, cueing, ticket printing).

Planning and coordination of advertising, publicity and promotion procedures (brochures, television spots, advertisements, posters, flyers, house programs, mailings).

Establishment and maintenance of relations with Independent Film Importers and Distributors of America, Motion Picture Association of America, film industry, exhibitors; and negotiations with these groups.

Negotiations with customs and censor offices, establishment of special procedures, completing forms.

Procedures and supervision of film import and export, storage, checking, insurance.

Interviews with critics, meetings with film opinion makers; radio and television appearances; public relations.

Selection and supervision of installation of motion picture equipment at Philharmonic Hall (booth, screen and sound equipment).

Supervision of motion picture projection.

Coordination of social events.

Determination of budget and price scale.



Organization and supervision of special press screenings.

Supervision of staff and office procedures.

While the above was carried out with the full cooperation of the respective Lincoln Center departments and Film Festival Staff, the Coordinator's responsibilities necessitated full-time involvement for a longer period than predicted or anticipated.

Given the success and recognition of this year's Festival, it is clear that the range and complexity of the work will inevitably increase, both automatically and intentionally, especially in the areas of public relations and press, office procedures, contact with industry and the like.

At the present moment, two and a half months after the end of the Festival:

The First Festival is not yet over:

Certificates and press clippings for producers and directors, their production only now having been completed, must still be distributed.

Negotiations with the projectionists union and equipment supplier continue.

There is correspondence pertaining to sponsors, public relations and the films we exhibited.

Simultaneously, we are already working on next year's Festival:

Preparation of budget.

Meetings with department heads.

Determination of basic operational procedures for next year, and determination of price scale.

Negotiations with the Museum of Modern Art and the Independent Film Importers and Distributors of America.

Determination of dates, starting times, theatre procedures.

Negotiations with projectionists union for basic agreement.

- B. The scope and variety of its programming must be broadened by the Director's participation in programming.

Richard Round and I agree that it is impossible for a single individual to cover as many of the relevant feature and short films festivals as desirable and indeed necessary, and that the scope of the New York Film Festival

program can and should be broadened.

It is therefore recommended that:

- a. The Director join Richard Roud to constitute the programming team. In fact, as stated earlier, he was actively involved in the consideration and selection of films for the first Festival.
- b. The Director attend certain international festivals not now covered such as Mar del Plata, Mexico, Oberhausen, Moscow, and this December, the International Experimental Film Festival at Knokke-le-Zoute. (The budget submitted allows for the Director's coverage of two international Festivals this year.)
- c. The Director screen and select films in New York through-out the year such as unreleased American films which Richard Roud cannot see in Europe. (The budget submitted includes an item estimating the cost of these screenings.)

## 2. Public Relations and Consultation

It is a prime necessity for Lincoln Center (however extensive or limited its film activities become) to have a professional film person on its staff to advise it in relation to any film matters, projects and proposals that may arise in the course of time, and to cultivate relations with both industry and press. These activities must be in the hands of a person thoroughly familiar with the motion picture world, aware of its intricacies, cross currents, conflicts and attitudes, so as to most expeditiously and diplomatically deal with them.

- A. Expansion of contacts with film industry and press into a year-round activity.

Due to the increasing attention to the Festival by the Motion Picture Association of America, and our continuing collaboration with both the Independent Film Importers and Distributors of America and the Museum of Modern Art, it becomes impossible to confine our contacts, negotiations and meetings with these groups to sporadic meetings in the months preceding the Festival; we must service and develop these contacts on a consistent, year-round basis.

The advantages and necessities of year-round attention to, and cultivation of the film press are too obvious to require further elucidation. The maintenance and expansion of these contacts is absolutely essential to the future of both the Festival and any and all other film activities at Lincoln Center.

From the strengthening of relations with industry and press there will undoubtedly emerge fruitful possibilities for additional film activities and new projects at the Center.



B. Relations with governmental and cultural bodies.

On the subject of film, relations must be expanded between Lincoln Center and government bodies (for example, the President's Advisory Board on the Arts), films museums, Boards of Education, Civic Centers, foundations, educational institutions; and their corresponding bodies abroad concerned with the development (and financing) of projects in film and the arts.

C. Evaluation of film projects proposed to Lincoln Center.

There have already been several proposals regarding specific projects, such as a Japanese Film Week, film series devoted to particular interest areas, inquiries as to the extension of the Film Festival to the Hollywood Film Museum, the University of California, the Toronto Civic Center. Likewise, the advisability of Lincoln Center participation in certain industry projects, other festivals, conventions will have to be examined. The number of such proposals will increase sharply as Lincoln Center begins to move more forcibly into film; their respective merits will have to be carefully judged by a qualified person in every instance.

D. Selection and installation of projection equipment at Lincoln Center Theatres.

As our film activities widen, so will the need for motion picture equipment in an many of the projected Lincoln Center facilities as possible. This question is discussed in greater detail on Pages 16 and 17, with specific recommendations.

As regards the nature of these installations, only an experienced person can make the selections and provide supervision through-out all the laborious stages.

3. Exploration and Development of Plans for a Film Constituent

The advisability of a Film Constituent at Lincoln Center, its organizational structure, programming, location and financing, etc., need to be investigated. A preliminary exploration of this subject follows. Further investigation cannot proceed without a Director.

### III. The Need for a Film Constituent at Lincoln Center

#### 1. The Need

While the existing art theatres in New York admirably fulfill a valuable function in introducing frequently first-rate films, even the more adventurous theatres remain directly subject to box-office pressures and the dictates of a commercial exhibition policy. They cannot:

Afford to show films of value but of so-called questionable box office potential, and must immediately drop a film if attendance is too small.

Show programs consisting exclusively of shorts or of non-theatrical educational, scientific or art films.

"Introduce" unknown debutante film makers, however meritorious; show controversial social documentaries or avant-garde films for fear of antagonizing their customers.

Provide for lectures, symposia, special series and projects.

If Lincoln Center is to meet its stated purpose to present, sponsor and encourage all the performing arts, the motion picture is deserving of a position equal to that of music, theatre and dance at the Center.

The establishment of a Film Constituent at Lincoln Center will:

Offer further proof of Lincoln Center's pioneering in the cultural and artistic field.

Affirm the cinema as one of the significant arts of the twentieth century.

Contribute toward the encouragement and promotion of this art.

Bring the cinema into fruitful relationship and cooperation with the other arts at the Center.

Make it possible to present a wide variety of programs and projects not feasible to primarily commercial ventures limited by their very nature to the simple exhibition of motion pictures.

For the first time, provide a comprehensive Film Center in New York with a permanent home and continuity, which will be one step ahead of the commercial cinema, not subject to box office pressures, oriented toward the art rather than the business of film, and continuously support-

ing or opening new areas presently unacceptable, unavailable or even unknown to the commercial cinema.

## 2. Possible Programs and Projects

The emphasis of the Lincoln Center Film Constituent should be on the entire contemporary world cinema, but especially where it is not adequately covered by the commercial showcases, museums or film societies.

### A. Single Events

#### a. Screenings:

##### Feature Films

Forthcoming films worthy of special previews and premieres: There is no doubt that Lincoln Center will be offered an increasing number of worthwhile films prior to release by their producers or distributors, and that we should take advantage of the opportunity to sponsor an initial showing. Such previews might take the form of gala organizational or charity-benefit premieres; or be utilized to focus attention on meritorious but commercially difficult films.

Foreign films without American distribution: Many fine foreign films are unavailable through commercial channels because of their producers' exaggerated expectations of the American market, or because of supposed risk at the box office. This category includes a considerable number of prize-winners at International Festivals, and works widely praised in the international film press and film circles.

Significant early works by eminent contemporary directors: Film makers such as Visconti, Antonioni, De Sica have acquired fame through films which often have not been shown in this country, but are worthy of presentation.

New American and foreign films by promising young film makers: Contemporary trends in the cinema that are worthy of encouragement are represented by many young film makers whose opportunities with the press and the public are limited.

##### Short Films

Each year, scores of outstanding shorts are produced internationally which are widely shown abroad, honored at film festivals, passionately discussed in the international film press - and yet are not seen in this



country, due to the exigencies and vicissitudes of American distribution and exhibition requirements.

Science: films in the field of ethnology, astronomy, medicine, psychology, psychiatry, physics; utilizing high-speed, time-lapse, X-ray photography, cinemicroscopy, etc.; arranged in such programs as:

INTO SPACE: Films of the Universe  
THE BRAIN  
MAGIC, RITUAL AND MYTH

Art: films arranged in such programs as:

ARTS OF THE EAST: India, Japan,  
Southeast Asia  
A PROGRAM OF FOLK ART AND AMERICANA  
PRIMITIVE ART: Africa, Australia,  
Alaska  
THE ARTIST AT WORK: Matisse, Braque,  
Picasso

Fact and Document: such programs as:

NEW YORK AS SEEN BY EUROPEAN FILM MAKERS  
FILM AS RECORD: Colette, Jung, Casals,  
McCarthy  
THE PARTISAN FILM: American and Foreign  
Propaganda films  
FILM DOCUMENTS OF THE NAZI TERROR

Avant-garde and Experimental Films: films emphasizing cinematic concepts which parallel the techniques and concepts of modern art; abstract, symbolist, expressionist, surrealist, non-objective, dadaist, impressionist.

Animation: advances in the fields of animation, cut-outs, collage films, single-frame animations, hand-drawn films made without a camera.

b. Lectures, symposia, demonstrations:

There does not exist in New York at present a forum for film professionals, film critics and film audiences to meet in an organized manner to discuss film as an art form. This has led to a deplorable lack of communication, publicity and cross-fertilization, so necessary for this young art.

Evenings planned to meet this need should be academic or adventurous; participants should include personalities in the other arts. Sample topics might include:

POETRY AND FILM  
Allen Ginsberg, Arthur Miller, Elia Kazan,  
Stan Brakhage, Parker Tyler

# THE QUESTION OF FILM CENSORSHIP

A symposium consisting of a film maker, a civil liberties lawyer, a critic, a New York State censor.

MEYER SCHAPIRO: "Muriel" As Modern Art"

DIALOGUE: Hitchcock and a Leading Critic  
Followed by a reception for Mr. Hitchcock.

## WORK IN PROGRESS

Sequences from forthcoming films by famed or unknown directors, analyzed by the film makers.

## "TIME" AND "MEMORY" IN THE MODERN CINEMA

A symposium, with examples from the films of Resnais and Antonioni.

## ROBERT WISE DISCUSSES "WEST SIDE STORY"

Such an event should take place immediately prior to the commercial opening of the given film.

### c. Award Presentations and Screenings:

#### ROBERT J. FLAHERTY AWARD WINNERS

The year's best documentary films, as selected by a distinguished jury; an internationally respected American Award; now in its tenth year.

#### CREATIVE FILM FOUNDATION WINNERS

The year's best experimental films, as selected annually by a distinguished jury; now in its tenth year.

#### GOLDEN REEL FESTIVAL AWARD WINNERS

The year's best educational films, as selected by the nation's leading audio-visual educators and critics; an Educational Film Libraries Association event, now in its twelfth year.

### B. Film Series:

Grouped around a specific subject matter, these are suggestions for several series of programs, each consisting of five to ten evenings:

#### THE FILM IN \_\_\_\_\_:

Limited to a specific country or specific area in which there exists a specific body of quality work as yet unseen here.

#### REAFFIRMATION OF MAN

A series of films about Man and Society.

#### TOWARD A THEORY OF FILM:

Lectures by Panofsky, Campbell, Schapiro, Arnheim, Tyler, Kracauer, etc., accompanied by films.

#### SCIENCE AND FILM

A series of five programs of the world's best science films. Similar series can be developed for music, art, dance.

THE FILM DIRECTOR: SERIES I-The Films of Visconti or Huston, Kurosawa, Torre Nilsson, Bunuel, Ozu, Wyler, Renoir, etc.

#### C. Festivals:

Built on different formats, there could, of course, be other film festivals at Lincoln Center:

##### INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF TELEVISION FILMS

A survey of international television productions, especially in the fields of information, art and entertainment.

##### INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF AVANT-GARDE AND ART FILMS

Similar in scope and nature to the 1958 and 1963 International Avant-garde Film Festivals in Belgium, at which over 300 films from more than 25 nations were premiered.

##### INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF SHORT FILMS

Presenting a survey of the world's best short films in all categories, many of them prize-winners at international festivals.

#### D. Special Projects:

A Film Constituent could provide the genesis of many kinds of activities, in addition to screenings and other events listed above. The potential is enormous and could include:

##### The Children's Cinema:

A series of film programs designed for children, ranging from story-telling films (often based on children's books) to educational, experimental, comedy and art films. Also, special events relating to children's films: "Holiday Films for Children" and "The Year's Best Children's Films"-a program for educators.



A Film School:

To encourage the teaching of film esthetics, history and production (including direction, editing, cinematography, writing, acting, music), staffed by film professionals and guest lecturers from other art fields.

In Damrosch Park - Open Air Summer Film ShowsTeachers Film Seminar at Lincoln Center:

Presented in cooperation with the Board of Education; to train teachers in the use of film as a medium of education and art; to show them, on a continuing basis, the best new educational films in all fields.

Publications Program:

A program of film publications, monographs, filmographies, documents on film, program notes and related materials, on film esthetics, criticism, history; correlated (where possible) with the screening activities at Lincoln Center, and undertaken in collaboration with a major American publisher.

Touring Exhibitions, Circulation of Programs and Projects, Collaboration with Museums, Civic, Educational and Art Centers nationally:

In connection with all activities described, possible collaboration shall be explored in regard to exhibitions, tours of posters, photographs, storyboards, lectures and symposia, with related film events to accompany and parallel these exhibitions. Possible correspondents include Hopkins Center, Dartmouth; Gyorgy Kepes, Yale University; University of California; Carpenter Center of the Visual Arts; San Francisco Museum of Art, etc.

Library Collection:

Books, periodicals, posters, stills and film documents. A continuing project of and at the Performing Arts Library.

Involving Artists in Other Fields:

Since the emphasis of the Film Constituent is on contemporary film as an integral part of all modern art, there will be a strong and continuous attempt to involve leading artists and critics in the other arts (the literary and fine arts as well as music, theatre and dance) in symposia, juries, program planning, production, school activities.

E. Films Produced At Lincoln Center:

While it is not being suggested that Lincoln Center embark on large-scale film production, there are some producing activities that the Constituent

could well undertake by:

Producing Filmed Records of Lincoln Center  
Stage Performances:

To preserve leading works and personalities of twentieth century art for posterity.

Commissioning Films for Festival '66:

A production plan financed by the Lincoln Center Fund and designed to encourage new talent, new forms of expression and significant achievement in the film medium to be placed on a permanent and continuing basis; related to the Center's projected annual Festivals of the Arts.

Festival Trailer Award:

A competition for American film makers, to produce Film Festival (or Lincoln Center) trailers; monetary awards.

### 3. Organization

At this time any proposals regarding the organizational steps necessary for the establishment of a Constituent must of necessity be highly speculative. Under the existing circumstances, the comprehensive exploration and research vital to definitive and detailed recommendations are formidable tasks requiring more time.

Nevertheless, the following are offered as possible guidelines:

- Phase I: A positive directive by Lincoln Center's Board of Directors to proceed.
- Phase II: Establishment of the general structure for a Lincoln Center Constituent (possibly named "Lincoln Center Film Associates"), the appointment of a Director, staff and the location of offices either at Lincoln Center or elsewhere.
- Phase III: The New York Film Festival becomes the first activity of the "Lincoln Center Film Associates." A board is established to finance the Film Festival, allowing for its own administrative and publicity staff.
- Phase IV: The Lincoln Center Film Society becomes the second activity of the "Lincoln Center Film Associates."

An over-all membership fee entitles the participants to numerous privileges, such as attendance at film society screenings; priority and discounts on New York Film Festival tickets; subscription to a newsletter; discounts on

publications, art theatre tickets, equipment.

Phase V: Full capitalization to support an independent, cooperating unit and its programs, including complete managerial and promotional staff, permanent offices, and possibly a permanent theatre.

#### 4. The Question of a Theatre

In considering the formation of a Film Constituent, the desirability of a permanent theatre devoted entirely to film, containing auditoriums of different sizes, with various types of projection equipment will eventually deserve serious discussion. At best, however, the addition of such a theatre could only be some years in the future.

Pending its construction, a Film Constituent could nevertheless operate within the complex of buildings planned at present, providing the other Lincoln Center halls were equipped for motion pictures and dates were made available for film showings despite predictable scheduling difficulties.

Programs and projects along the lines proposed in this report would require different-sized auditoriums to succeed:

2000 - 3000 seats: usable for the New York Film Festival, 70mm films, premieres of commercial films, screenings of films capable of attracting larger audiences.

700 - 1200 seats: an intermediate size theatre for general screenings, educational projects, children's films and symposia; equipped to include 16mm.

100 - 300 seats: for screenings of specialized appeal, lectures, screenings for press and Lincoln Center staff; equipped to include 16mm.

If the utilization of other Lincoln Center theatres for film events is not feasible due to booking conflicts, the only remaining alternatives are either to temporarily rent (in the name of the Film Constituent) other New York locations (such as the Museum of Modern Art, art theatres or auditoriums) for the purpose, or to postpone certain events until a film theatre is erected at Lincoln Center.

#### 5. Recommendations Regarding Equipment

There is immediate need for a policy decision by Lincoln Center regarding motion picture equipment in its various theatres.

Since the establishment of a theatre exclusively devoted to film is not an immediate possibility, it is recommended that equipment be installed in as



many of the projected Lincoln Center facilities as possible.

Such installation requires adequate circuits, motion picture booths, screen and sound equipment and, therefore, this decision should be made prior to the actual completion of the various buildings, so as to avoid subsequent heavy expenditures for rewiring and structural modifications (frequently impossible after completion).

The programs and projects mentioned above require the installation of appropriate motion picture equipment of various types.

Facilities for projecting films in 35mm in all aspect ratios (1:33, 1:66, 1:85 and Cinemascope).  
This will accommodate the majority of films to be shown at Lincoln Center.

Facilities for projecting films in the 16mm gauge.  
At least one such installation in one of the Lincoln Center Theatres is absolutely essential because a large majority of educational, informational, scientific, art and experimental motion pictures are produced in 16mm only.

Given present day 16mm carbon arc or Zenon equipment, 16mm films can be projected to the same size and brilliance as 35mm films, with the audience unaware of the type of film used. 16mm projection of this type must not be confused with semi-professional or home movie equipment.

The same screen, sound equipment and wiring can be used for 16mm, which requires only the purchase of 16mm projectors and the services of a trained 16mm projectionist (available from the same union which provides 35mm projectionists).

The determination of which of the Lincoln Center Halls is to be used for 16mm must be the result of actual projection tests. In general, however, use of the smaller halls is indicated.

Facilities for projecting films in the 70mm gauge.  
It is quite clear that in the future Lincoln Center will either want or be offered first-rate, as yet unreleased films for possible previews or Festival screenings in the 70mm gauge. For example, we were unable to accept Otto Preminger's offer of the world premiere of his 70mm film THE CARDINAL at this year's Festival.

In the future, it may be advantageous to plan to show Festival films, if in 70mm, at the New York State Theatre, for example, while all others continue at Philharmonic Hall. This would contribute to the over-all aura and prestige of the Festival; especially since some of the most important new releases are in 70mm.

Installation of 70mm in one location would require a

substantial investment (estimated by National Theatre Supply Company, the suppliers of our present motion picture equipment at Philharmonic Hall, at approximately \$35,000). Installation would not require a special screen, but would involve: the purchase of 2 70mm projectors (equally usable for 35mm films); 6 portable speakers positioned behind the screen; a number of "surround speakers" mounted through-out the auditorium; and circuitry for these items.

Screen: There is need in at least one Lincoln Center Hall for the necessary structural provisions on the stage to allow for permanent mounting of a screen, which when not in use can be rolled up, moved down into the stage, or pushed back toward the back wall, with a traveller to cover it.

This will permit us - without large operational difficulties - to present films at regular or irregular intervals or at short notice in halls ordinarily being used for other Lincoln Center activities.

With present Philharmonic Hall arrangements, the screen must be laboriously rebuilt and mounted into wooden frames by stagehands for each use, a costly operation requiring several hours; and afterwards, demounted in the same manner and with equal expense.

## 6. The Question of the Industry

While the film projects at Lincoln Center will draw their material from many divergent sources (such as independents and foreign producers), we must not disregard the problems of the domestic film industry, beset by economic difficulties and competition from related visual media such as television. It is imperative to retain its good-will, evidence our cooperation and have theirs in helping us obtain films, and publicizing our activities through their own channels.

This should be done in full awareness that any concomitant attempts at industry intervention in the planning of our programs must be avoided.

The preservation of fruitful relations with the exhibitors, distributors and producers will make it advisable for us to avoid any semblance of competition or duplication of effort in our activities and screenings.

At the same time, we must educate the industry to the importance of the Lincoln Center Film Constituent for its promotion of film as an art, which will ultimately redound to their own commercial advantage.

## 7. The Need for a Subsidy

While the emphasis of Lincoln Center film projects will be on self-sustaining, if not profitable ventures, the idea of a Film Constituent subsidy



can justifiably be raised.

At least initially and in some cases for a considerable period of time, certain of the projects discussed in this report cannot be expected to pay their own way. Nevertheless, their artistic and educational values are so obvious that funds must be found to develop them into ultimately self-sustaining ventures.

The Constituent itself, with its costly formative needs including an administrative and creative staff, offices and other facilities, promotional and advertising expenses needs such sustenance at least at the outset, and possibly later, in direct proportion to the scope and variety of its programs.

It is precisely through this kind of support and help that Lincoln Center will be able to develop what New York and America so definitely needs; a center for cinema, in which the artistic and educational potential of the medium can be more fully explored and set forth.



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